

Message Text

SECRET

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46

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W

----- 116607

O 301711Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8396

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 15695

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, GW

SUBJECT: MOVEMENT OF US SUPPLIES TO MIDDLE EAST FROM
FRG

REF: BONN 15630

1. SUMMARY: DURING CALL BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY
STOESSEL AND AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND OCTOBER 30, FONMIN
SCHEEL DISCUSSED US/FRG DIFFERENCES OVER THE MIDDLE
EAST. HE MADE A VEILED INDICATION THAT THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT RPT NOT TAKE ANY ACTION WHICH WOULD
IMPEDE THE US RESUPPLY OF ISRAEL, BUT AVOIDED A SPECIFIC
RESPONSE TO THE POINTS THE AMBASSADOR RAISED THE PRE-
VIOUS DAY WITH STATE SECRETARY FRANK (REFTEL). IN A
SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION WITH STATE SECRETARY FRANK, IT
BECAME CLEAR THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S POSITION
WOULD BE DECIDED AT A HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OCTOBER 31
PRIOR TO SCHEEL'S DEPARTURE FOR MOSCOW (AT 1500 HOURS
LOCAL TIME). STATE SECRETARY FRANK TOLD AMBASSADOR
HILLENBRAND THAT HE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO GIVE AN
ANSWER BY THAT TIME. END SUMMARY.

2. SCHEEL OPENED THE DISCUSSION OF THE MIDDLE EAST
PROBLEM BY STATING THAT HE HAD BEEN UNHAPPY THAT US/FRG
DIFFERENCES HAD RESULTED IN A PUBLIC POLEMIC. LIKE
FRANK THE PREVIOUS DAY, SCHEEL BLAMED MUCH OF THE
PROBLEM ON THE UNINTENTIONAL AND UNFORTUNATE FRG FONOFF

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PRESS STATEMENT OF OCTOBER 25.

3. SCHEEL WENT ON TO REVIEW THE HISTORY OF THE FRG'S INDIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN THE RESUPPLY OPERATION, ALONG THE LINES WE HAVE HEARD FROM FRANK PREVIOUSLY. HE MADE THE POINT THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN NO WAY WISHED TO HINDER THE US EFFORT TO RESUPPLY ISRAEL, BUT HE STRESSED THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE IN THE FUTURE IF THE FRG WERE TO BE INFORMED IN MORE TIMELY FASHION ABOUT US INTENTIONS CONCERNING SHIPMENTS OF US SUPPLIES TO A COMBATANT AREA FROM GERMAN TERRITORY. HE ALSO EXPRESSED A DESIRE FOR EARLIER INFORMATION ABOUT US DECISIONS TO PLACE ITS TROOPS IN GERMANY ON ALERT. HE URGED THAT THE CONSULTATION PROCESS BE IMPROVED BETWEEN THE US AND ITS EUROPEAN ALLIES.

4. SCHEEL WAS FRANK TO ADMIT THAT THE GERMAN POSITION WAS EFFECTED BY TWO SOMEWHAT DIVERGENT FACTORS:

(A) GERMAN SENSITIVITY OVER THE RELATIONSHIP WITH ALL JEWS EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD, BASED ON THE GERMAN PAST;

(B) THE DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ARABS, TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE "WRONG DECISION" TO SUPPLY ISRAEL SECRETLY WITH ARMS IN 1965, A DECISION THAT HAD LED TO A BREAK BETWEEN THE FRG AND THE ARAB STATES.

SCHEEL SAID THAT THE FRG HAD NO DESIRE TO HAVE TO REBUILD THE RELATIONS WITH THE ARABS, A PROCESS THAT HAD TAKEN A GOOD DEAL OF EFFORT IN THE LAST FEW YEARS AND CULMINATED IN SUCCESS IN 1972.

5. ASSISTANT SECRETARY STOESEL EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR SCHEEL'S REMARKS. HE NOTED THAT THE USG HAD MADE A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE ARAB/ISRAELI CONFLICT AND THE DANGEROUS STEPS TAKEN BY THE USSR. HE FELT THAT THE ENTIRE ALLIANCE OUGHT TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE LATTER DEVELOPMENT, GIVEN THE EFFECT IT WOULD HAVE UPON EAST/WEST RELATIONS GENERALLY. ASSISTANT SECRETARY STOESEL ADDED THAT HE HAD CONCURRED WITH SCHEEL'S
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EXPRESSION OF DESIRE FOR AN INTENSIFIED CONSULTATION PROCEDURE AND WE WOULD BE WORKING ON THIS IN THE FUTURE.

6. IN CONCLUDING, SCHEEL AGAIN STRESSED THAT THE FRG HAD NO INTENTION OF IMPEDING THE US IN ITS EFFORT TO MAINTAIN PEACE WHEREVER THE US CONSIDERED THIS NECESSARY.

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7. IN A SUBSEQUENT LUNCHEON CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND, STATE SECRETARY FRANK SAID THAT SCHEEL'S REMARKS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN AS A DIRECT RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S DEMARCHE ON OCTOBER 29 (REFTEL). FRANK SAID THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD BE MEETING AT A HIGH-LEVEL ON OCTOBER 31 TO CONSIDER THE US APPROACH. FRANK HOPED TO BE ABLE TO GIVE THE AMBASSADOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THIS MEETING, WHICH WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO END WELL BEFORE SCHEEL'S 1500 HOUR DEPARTURE FOR MOSCOW THAT DAY. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND STRESSED THE URGENT NATURE OF THE PROBLEM, NOTING THAT DEMURRAGE CHARGES WERE RISING AND THAT WASHINGTON CLEARLY WISHED TO GET A MOVE ON WITH THE REMAINING SHIPMENTS TO ISRAEL. FRANK TOOK NOTE OF THIS POINT.

8. THE GERMANS WERE OBVIOUSLY AT PAINS TO TRY TO TAKE THE HEAT OUT OF THIS CONFLICT WITH THE US. SCHEEL REPEATEDLY STRESSED HIS DESIRE TO KEEP THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM A MATTER OF DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS.

9. GERMAN AND AMERICAN TV CORRESPONDENTS WERE PRESENT AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE, APPARENTLY A GERMAN INITIATIVE, PRIOR TO AND FOLLOWING MR. STOESSEL'S

MEETING WITH SCHEEL. AT THE END OF THE MEETING,

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY STOESEL WAS OBLIGED TO ANSWER MEDIA QUESTIONS. HE TOOK THE LINE AGREED UPON WITH SCHEEL, I.E. THAT HIS MEETING HAD BEEN IN THE CONTEXT OF A GENERAL TOUR OF EUROPEAN CAPITALS TO DISCUSS US/EUROPEAN RELATIONS, EAST/WEST ISSUES, AND MATTERS OF CURRENT INTEREST. MR. STOESEL REFRAINED FROM ANSWERING QUESTIONS AS TO WHETHER THE MIDDLE EAST HAD BEEN A SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION. THIS IS THE PRESS LINE THE EMBASSY AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE PROPOSE TO TAKE IN HANDLING QUESTIONS ABOUT MR. STOESEL'S MEETING WITH SCHEEL.
HILLENBRAND

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